

Week 2: A Power We Must Receive - The Comfort of the Holy Spirit

Day 12: GPS

The Passage: Romans 8:1-17; Acts 13:1-4

The Focus: "For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God." (Acts 13:2) "While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, 'Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.'" (Romans 8:14)

The Meditation: "The Holy Spirit said . . ."

Empowering Truths: In the 1980s I had a job delivering the Seattle Times to homes that had been missed by their delivery boy. I would call in for addresses and then search a Thomas Brothers Map Book for the address and figure out how I could get there. Today I can hardly read a map. Instead I tell Siri where I want to go, and she directs me there turn by turn.

The New Testament church was "walking in . . . the help of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 9:31). One of these "helps" was the Spirit's guidance, what I call GPS: "God's Positioning Spirit." In Acts 13 we see one manifestation of the Spirit's leading. As the Antioch church fasted and prayed, they received the direction for their next turn, which was sending Barnabas and Saul to go plant churches.

Does your GPS still work? Those who are experiencing gospel multiplication movements around the globe will tell you unequivocally, "Absolutely!" Then they will tell you multiple stories of "God's Positioning Spirit" functioning to lead them to open doors, supernatural connections, and unimagined opportunities.

At the same time, we realize the power of the Spirit to direct us is often unused or abused. Weird stuff can happen when you claim you are feeling or hearing God speak to you. Consequently, most believers have little expectation for the Spirit to speak. Yet the same Spirit that spoke to the Antioch church and is speaking to the global church is speaking to you today. If we set aside time to seek him, tune in and listen expectantly, then we may be surprised at what we hear.

Our phone's GPS is more easily heard and provides more details than God's Positioning System. For example, in Acts 8:26 God tells Philip, "Go south to the desert road." That's it. But it was enough. As Philip obeyed, he just started traveling south. Then he met the Ethiopian eunuch along the way, shared the gospel, baptized him, and the good news spread in Ethiopia.

Often the Spirit's leading is a nudge, a prompting that leaves you wondering, Was that my imagination or the Spirit's whisper? I've learned to lean into those times. When you just start traveling south like Philip did, good things happen along the way.

Fasting, prayer, solitude, worship, quietness, Scripture meditation, anointed preaching—these tune the ears of my heart to the Spirit's voice.

Often the Spirit's voice will call us to do something that our natural mind instinctually rejects. The Spirit clearly called my wife and me to a tiny church in urban Long Beach when I had a generous offer to be lead pastor at a large suburban church. I almost missed the Spirit's direction due to my selfish desires. Today the suburban church is gone, and the Long Beach church has grown and planted dozens of churches.

Think about it: The Antioch church sought the Spirit . . . "The Holy Spirit said" . . . the Antioch church listened and obeyed . . . and a movement was started. May this be our story as well.

Power Truth: The Spirit still speaks to those who expect, seek, and listen.

Our Prayer: Father, we want to be like Jesus who listened intently for your directions. Jesus, you taught us to pray daily for your leadership, and then you gave us your Spirit to guide us. Holy Spirit, we want to live attentively to your voice. Forgive us for forging ahead on our own without bending our ear to hear if you are directing us differently. Empower us to listen for the glory of Jesus.